
To prevent and treat disease and disability; to promote healthy lifestyles; and to protect and promote the health and quality of our environment.

Public Service Announcement

Four Steps can Help Prevent Summertime Food Related Illness

DATE: July 2, 2001

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Cookouts, picnics, and barbecues are all part of summertime fun. Every summer Central District Health Department sees an increase in food related illness due to improper food handling. Follow these four simple steps to safe food in the summertime.

1. Clean. Wash hands and surfaces often.

Wash hands, utensils, cutting boards, and countertops after preparing or handling raw meat or poultry. Use bleach to sanitize (1 tsp./gallon of water).

2. Separate, don't cross contaminate.

Keep cooked foods separate from raw foods. Use separate coolers for raw foods, ready to eat foods, and drinks. Cross contamination of foods could occur if bacteria from raw food comes in contact with cooked food. Do not use the same dishes and utensils for raw and cooked meat and poultry.

3. Cook to proper temperatures.

Cook food to a safe internal temperature to destroy harmful bacteria. Use a food thermometer to be sure the food has reached this temperature. Poultry should reach 165 degrees F. Ground beef hamburgers should reach 155 degrees F. Beef, veal, and lamb (steaks, roasts and chops) should be cooked to 145 degrees F. All cuts of pork should reach 150 degrees F. Fish should reach a temperature of 145 degrees F.

If you don't have a thermometer, check the color of the inside of hamburgers. They should be brown or gray in the middle. Chicken juices should be clear. Fish should flake easily when done.

4. Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.

Cold foods should be kept below 40 degrees F, hot foods above 140 degrees F. Foods left out between those temperatures for more than two hours should be discarded.

When packing a lunch, start with all cold ingredients, including the bread. Place cold drinks and fruit, or a frozen bottle of water with the lunch. Use an insulated lunch bag, if possible.

Visit these web sites for additional food safety information:

- www.fsis.usda.gov/OA/pubs/facts_barbecue.htm
- www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/greenline/00v2/10.html

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